

the second session of the 112th Congress.

Our national debt recently surpassed economic output, meaning the national debt is now greater than the value of the entire U.S. economy. Despite almost \$1 trillion of stimulus spending, there's been 35 straight months of national unemployment averages greater than 8 percent. These are the facts, Mr. Speaker, yet some are calling for more deficit spending and tax increases, and that's just plain wrong.

The best way to reduce our debt and deficit is to get America back to work. Over the last 12 months, this has been the focus of this Chamber. The House has passed more than 30 jobs bills, most of which the Senate has refused to consider. Next week will mark 1,000 days since the Senate has passed a budget.

Today, the House again has taken the steps to disapprove of further raising the debt ceiling. Failure to address even a budget will only serve to speed up our downward spiral. Mr. Speaker, there is no way around it: Without dealing with the debt, this country's long-term economic outlook will remain unclear.

REMEMBERING REV. BERNARD REISER

(Mr. PAULSEN asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PAULSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life of Rev. Bernard Reiser, who passed away late last year at the age of 87.

Ordained in the Catholic Church in 1949, Father Reiser spent most of his adult life in the community of Coon Rapids, Minnesota, where he established Epiphany Catholic Church back in 1964. He helped grow Epiphany from a small 125-family parish to one of the largest parishes in the State, with over 5,000 member families.

And though he was well known within the community of Coon Rapids, Father Reiser's work extended far beyond its borders. Since 1996, he had traveled to Haiti, where he helped improve the lives of the less fortunate. And last year, he was honored for his international aid work by a local Twin Cities television station in our community.

Though he will be missed, his memory does live on in the community and the lives that he touched at Epiphany and in Haiti.

CREATING JOBS IN AMERICA

(Mr. KINGSTON asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KINGSTON. Mr. Speaker, there are three things we need to do to create jobs in America:

Number one, we need to roll back job-killing regulations. You don't have

to work for worker safety at the expense of the job. There is a balance. Government agencies need to work with the entrepreneur and the employer and the job creator, not against him or her. We can find a balance.

Number two, you need to drill your own oil. For us to suggest and believe that the people in the Middle East are more environmentally friendly or more sensitive than we are is ridiculous. We have got to get our head out of the Middle East sand and our drills and bring it back home to America. If gas fell \$1 a gallon, it would be a huge economic boom to our country.

And, number three, we need tax simplification. Ask any audience, "How many of you fill out your own tax return?" and then ask, "How many of you pay to fill out your own taxes?" and inevitably you'll find an 80/20 split. It is ridiculous when 80 percent of the people in America have to pay an accountant or a lawyer to fill out their taxes. We need tax simplification.

LOCAL KERNERSVILLE BUSINESSES SHOW HOW PRIVATE SECTOR CAN HELP PEOPLE

(Ms. FOXX asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. FOXX. Mr. Speaker, the headlines regularly remind us about the country's trying economic times, but back in the Fifth District of North Carolina there are stories of people coming together to help one another through difficult situations—without the help of government. In Kernersville, North Carolina, for example, two local businesses have played a crucial role in ensuring that the community's less fortunate are fed.

Over the holidays, the interior design company Designer's Attic and the construction firm Friddle and Company, Inc. paired up to bring thousands of meals to the needy. Designer's Attic decorated Friddle and Company's "Holiday House," which was open to the public for tours. Instead of a tour fee, the businesses requested that visitors pay in canned goods. Out of the shared endeavor, the businesses were able to donate enough food to the Second Harvest Food Bank for 17,000 meals.

In a time of difficult economic news and consistent government overreach, it's a thrill to highlight this kind of success story.

Congratulations to the good people at Designer's Attic and Friddle and Company, Inc. for giving back to the community in such a creative and effective manner.

GETTING BACK ON ROAD TO PROSPERITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ROKITA). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 5, 2011, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. GOHMERT) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. GOHMERT. Mr. Speaker, it's a privilege to be speaking on the floor here this evening.

Here we've been talking for some time about the huge deficit spending that's going on. In fact, Republicans have promised to make massive cuts. And the old story that used to be told about the fellow Texan, Sam Rayburn, about a young freshman Democrat coming up and talking about how difficult things were here in the House and that: Gee, as a Democrat, it's obvious the Republicans are our enemy. They're trying to stop us from doing what we need to, and, boy, the media's not helping. And Speaker Rayburn stopped him, reportedly, and said: Son, the Republicans are not your enemy. The media is not your enemy. At the other end of the hall, the Senate, now they're your enemy.

Well, I thought that was a strange story when I heard that about Speaker Rayburn, but the longer I've been here, the more we see so many great bills that have come out of the House in the last year have gone down the hall and are languishing for lack of action. And so when I read that a friend down the hall, Leader REID, was lambasting Republicans for a do-nothing status, it was remarkable to me that they could have so many House bills sitting down there waiting to do something and yet doing nothing with them.

Now, we have been trying to get bills passed into law that would make substantial cuts. It's still, as our friend from east Texas, Bo Pilgrim, used to say, a mind-boggling thing to have seen this President come in in 2009, with Speaker PELOSI in charge of the House and Leader REID in charge of the Senate, and to know that we had been just vilified as majority Republicans in the House in 2006 for exceeding the amount of income coming in by \$160 billion, vilified, and yet when President Obama became the President and Leader REID and Speaker PELOSI were in charge, we ran a deficit of 10 times that much in 1 year. Incredible.

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Now one thing that should not have ever happened is to have our national security out on the table as a bargaining chip in the debt ceiling negotiation. But it was. And we were told that, Gee, neither side is going to allow those kinds of cuts to occur to our national security.

And lo and behold, being in Afghanistan, seeing the new year come in with our military men and women in some remote operating areas—I went with Senator JIM INHOFE from Oklahoma and JOE BARTON from Texas—and being in remote areas, it was amazing to hear some folks say, We're already being told amounts that we're going to be cut because of the sequestration coming. Talking with some of our Texas National Guard folks, I've been told over the last couple of weeks, We're already being told about moneys that are being cut. These are people that are